CHRISTMAS UNDER THREE FLAGS

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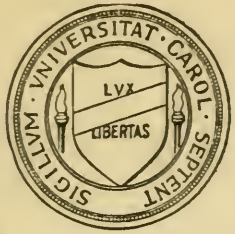

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CHRISTMAS UNDER THREE FLAGS

A Merry Christmas to One and All

The Model American Home

Christmas Under Three Flags

BEING MEMORIES OF HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES IN THE WHITE HOUSE WITH "OLD HICKORY," IN THE PALACE OF H. R. H. PRINCE OF PRUSSIA, AFTERWARDS EMPEROR WILLIAM I., AND AT THE ALAMO WITH THE ALCALDE'S DAUGHTER. . . . . .

MARY EMILY DONELSON WILCOX

Illustrated

Washington
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M C M

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LOVINGLY DEDICATED TO THE DEAR
DAUGHTER WHO DEDICATES
HER LIFE TO ME

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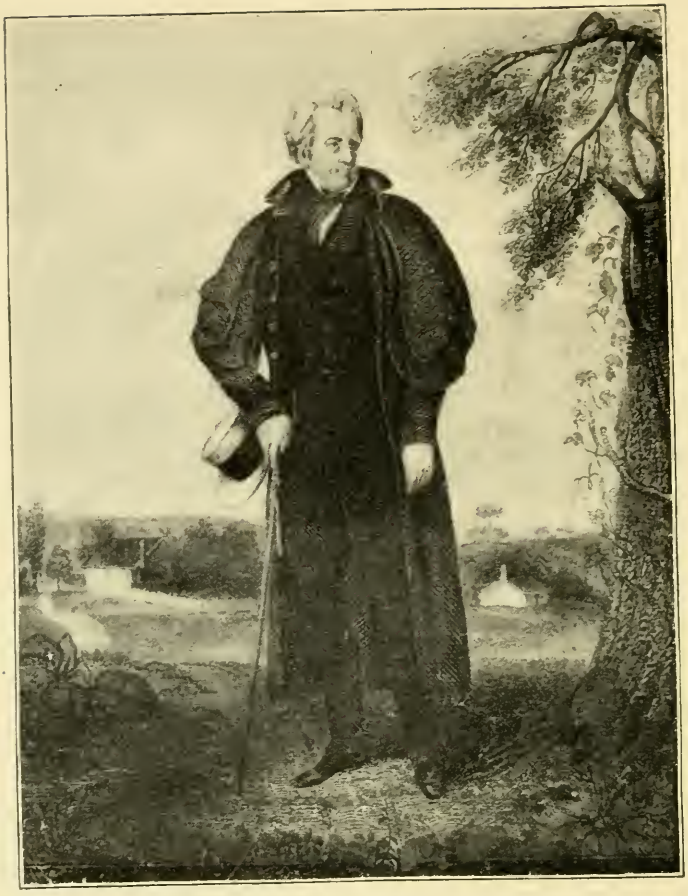


Andrew Jackson

SANCTA CLAUS AT THE WHITE HOUSE IN OLD HICKORY'S DAY.

THROUGH the mist of years I recall a Merry Christmas in my childhood's home long ago, and sweeter than music across still waters come memories of the blessed influences voicing in that historic mansion on that memorable occasion the glad tidings from Bethlehem: "Peace on earth, good will towards men." The White House, always an ideal domestic center, was, during President Jackson's occupancy, the model American home — love, kindness and charity guarding it like sentries, happiness and content overshadowing it like angel wings. Known to the world as the man whose iron will and fierce, ungovernable temper defied opposition and courted antagonism, he was the gentlest, tenderest, most patient of men at his own fireside. His household included the families

of his adopted son and private secretary, and Mrs. Donelson and Mrs. Jackson, handsome, accomplished, refined; Major Donelson and Mr. Jackson, brave, cultured, public-spirited, ably assisted him in discharging his high duties, and by their tact and grace obtained for his administration its unequaled social prestige. Loving, enjoying children as childless old people often do, and never so happy as when giving happiness to others, he made life for us little ones, — Donelsons, four; Jacksons, two,— clustering around his knee as around a doting grandfather's, well worth living.

Among the many bright incidents associated with the special Christmas so pleasantly remembered to-day were an East Room frolic and an unforgetable visit from Sancta Claus. The invitations for the former, which was probably the most enjoyable and successful juvenile fête ever given at the National Capital, read: "The children of President Jackson's family request you to join them on Christmas Day, at four o'clock P. M., in a frolic in the East Room. Washington, December 19, 1835."

Delivering them, receiving the acceptances,— there were few regrets,— selecting the games to be played and arranging other matters relating thereto, proved inexhaustible sources of fun, subordinate only to curiosity as to Sancta Claus and his mys-

terious movements. His generosity on former occasions tempted us to expect great results from his next visit, and, wondering whether he would come, if so, what he would bring us, how he looked and where he lived, we questioned the house servants and attendants, with whom we were privileged pets and among whom were some most interesting personalities; their answers, however, unlike the enchanted oracle in fairy lore, neither removing doubt nor confirming hope.

Mammy, a large, handsome mulatto, saucy and good-natured, fussy and domineering, as nursery autocrats generally are, and whom we both loved and feared, said: "I wish to goodness you children would stop talking about old Sindy Klaws. I 'd laugh if, tired of roaming 'round nights, filling stockings, he 'd stay at home and roast chestnuts by his own fire."

Jimmy O'Neil, our favorite usher and a typical son of Erin, said: "I could tell you lots about Saint Patrick, but mighty little about Sindy Klaws. I think, however, he and I must look alike, for Mammy always says when I make her a present, 'Go away, Jimmy, you 're as big a fool as Sindy Klaws, always giving people things.'" We shook our heads. "No, no, Jimmy; you are thin as a rail, have black, scraggly hair, a long, sharp nose

and no beard, and everybody knows Sancta Claus to be fat, squatty, with a red face, long white beard and wearing a baggy coat crammed with toys and goodies."

Vivart, the French cook, whose toothsome sweets invested him with great importance in our hungry eyes and whom we waylaid on his morning visit to my mother, said: "I no acquaint with Monsieur Sancta Claus; he no live in Paris. In my beautiful France across the blue sea *les petits enfans* never ask questions, speak only when spoken to, then with modest curtsies and downcast eyes."

"Ah, ha!" chuckled Mammy, "Mr. Vivart gives you a lesson in manners."

Hans, the German gardener, whose stories about Rhine castles and Black Forest witches and fairies were even more relished than the fruit and flowers he brought upstairs every morning, said: "I 'm sure Kris Kringle will come; he might forget some children, but not White House ones, though I think it strange he does not hang his pretty things on a green tree instead of stuffing them in ugly stockings. How I wish you could see the beautiful trees which the boys and girls in Germany trim and light on Christmas Eve, and where they gather to sing songs, play games and exchange presents. Heaven seems very near at those times."

Mrs. Andrew Jackson

"Your German trees may be lovely, Hans," said Carita, a Mexican embroideress occasionally employed by my mother, "but they can't compare with the fancy lamps which the Rio Grande *ninitos* hang on poles and bushes near their homes on Christmas Eve, and beneath which they find the next morning the beautiful gifts left for them by the Infant Jesus on His way from heaven to the Virgin's arms."

She often told us stories descriptive of Mexican customs, and had just commenced one about the Alcalde's daughter when Mammy called us to put on our wraps to go riding with the President, who wished us to meet him at the front door. Something like the "Divinity that doth hedge a king" invested him in our eyes, and always granting, often anticipating, his wishes, we never dared oppose or disobey his orders. While waiting, George, the coachman, told us of some bad children who found in their Christmas stockings a bundle of peach tree switches wrapped in paper labeled: "To be applied when spanking has proved insufficient," and said he hoped we would fare better. Now we had on several occasions come in close contact with peach tree switches, but we did not thank George for reminding us of the stinging experiences.

"To the Orphan Asylum," said the President on entering the carriage, in which were several packages,

and up in front was a basket of good things. He often drove there, taking me, cousin Rachel (his adopted son's daughter and the apple of his eye), and John along. It was at that time a small, modest structure with a limited number of patients, but its foundress, Mrs. Van Ness, had secured for it some influential patrons, among whom President Jackson, to whom all orphans were objects of tender solicitude, was not the least zealous. The following conversation enlivened the ride :

John : " Uncle " (the name affectionately applied to him by his wife's nieces and nephews), " did you ever see Sancta Claus ? "

The President, eyeing John curiously over his spectacles : " No, my boy ; I never did."

John : " Mammy thinks he 'll not come to-night. Did you ever know him to behave that way ? "

The President : " We can only wait and see. I once knew a little boy who not only never heard of Christmas or Sancta Claus, but never had a toy in his life ; and after the death of his mother, a pure, saintly woman, had neither home nor friends."

Chorus of children : " Poor little fellow ! Had he come to the White House we would have shared our playthings with him."

The children, quick to detect emotion, felt that some sad memory stirred the old man's heart, though

we little suspected he was referring to his own desolate childhood.

The President, after some moments' silence: "The best way to secure happiness is to bestow it on others, and we'll begin our holiday by remembering the little ones who have no mothers or fathers to brighten life for them." To the sweet-faced matron who welcomed us he said: "Here I am with some Christmas cheer for your young charges." The children gathered in the reception room, and it was gratifying to see their faces light up as, greeting each one, he distributed his gifts, and even more gratifying was it to note his pleasure at their grateful surprise. Raising in his arms a crippled boy, who replied to his inquiry, "Better, General; but, oh! so tired," he gave him a jumping-jack, saying: "Let 's see how this works," and the delighted child cried: "Ain't that cute? Hopping up and down just like an organ grinder's monkey."

The day, warm and bright, was more like May than December; the parks, then only grassy commons shaded by native trees, were still green, and the roses in the grounds adjoining all buildings were still in full bloom.

Returning home we called at several houses to leave Christmas souvenirs sent by my mother and Mrs. Jackson: a package of snuff for Mrs. Madison,

then visiting Washington relatives; a hand-painted mirror for Mr. Van Buren, who was reputed to be on very good terms with his looking-glass, and some embroidered handkerchiefs (Carita's handiwork) for intimate friends.

During President Jackson's incumbency the White House family, children included, except on state occasions, met at meal time, breakfast being at eight o'clock, dinner at two, and supper at half-past six. Mrs. Donelson sat at the head of the table, the President at the foot; we stood at our chairs until he asked a blessing, and at the close of meals were excused by a signal — smile or gesture — from my mother. Always serving the children first, saying they have better appetites, less patience, and should not be required to wait until their elders are helped, he encouraged us to talk and ask questions, evidently enjoying our remarks. He often rose early and went with us to Jackson (now La Fayette) Square for a game of mumble-the-peg, and occasionally, when supposed to be wrestling with state problems, hurling anathemas at Clay, Biddle, Adams, and other opponents, he might have been found in our play-room soothing some childish grievance or joining in some impromptu romp.

After supper we began preparations for the all-important, eagerly-anticipated event, hanging up our

stockings. Uncle had invited us, overruling my mother's protest that we might disturb him, to use his room, and thither we merrily trooped, he leading and apparently deeply interested. My brothers, Jackson and John, cousin Rachel and I borrowed Mammy's stockings, which, as she tipped the beam at 200, were as capacious as the Galilee fishermen's nets she often referred to. Cousin Rachel and brother Jackson hung theirs to side hooks on the mantel, I mine to the fancy hearth broom, and John, who was a born artist, his to a boot-jack carelessly left on Uncle's green leather arm chair; two smaller stockings for the babies, my little sister and young cousin, dangled from curtain rings at the foot of the bed. In the center of a large, airy, handsomely-furnished room stood a writing table at which the President and his Private Secretary often sat until the "wee sma" hours, discussing state matters and examining documents relating to them. Amid the papers promiscuously piled up thereon was an Old Testament that had belonged to his mother, his wife's Bible and a frame holding her miniature.

Surveying with delight the room after we had disposed of our stockings, we declared it reminded us of the Masonic Bazaar being held, which we had attended. Then brother Jackson had a bright idea. "Why not hang up a stocking for Uncle?" and

running to the Bureau he took a sock from the bottom drawer, tied it to the tongs and cried: "Now let 's see how Sancta Claus will treat you, Mr. Uncle Jackson, President of all these United States!" Surprised and amazed, the old man said: "Well, well, to think I 've waited nearly seventy years to hang up a Christmas stocking." "Better late than never," added brother Jackson.

We begged to be allowed to sit up to see Sancta Claus come down the chimney and pass through the fire without scorching his bundles, declaring we were not sleepy and promising never to be naughty again; then when Mammy hustled us off *nolens volens* to bed, we vowed we 'd lie awake all night, and, still protesting, sank into tired childhood's dreamless slumber. About daybreak Mammy's shrill voice calling "Christmas gift, you sleepy heads!" awoke us, and amazed, indignant, to find we had slept soundly after all, we sprang from bed and darted in our bare feet, unheeding her cries, "Wait till you 're dressed, you 'll catch your death of cold," across the hall to Uncle's room and asked, "Did Sancta Claus come?" "See for yourselves," said he, opening his door. He was up and dressed, had a bright fire, and watched us tenderly, as rushing in we seized our stockings, each one, his included, being well filled, and beneath them the presents we

Mrs. Emily Donelson

specially desired — for him a cob-pipe, pair of warm slippers and tobacco bag ; for brother Jackson, then eight years old and very mannish, talking grandly about shooting on the fly and jumping the hurdle, a small gun, saddle and bridle ; for John a hobby horse and drum, for me and cousin Rachel a doll and tea-set each, and for the babies toy rattles. Delighted we voted Sancta Claus to be the nicest old fellow in the world.

Had we known our real benefactor we would have felt some disappointment, dearly as we loved him, for the occult has indescribable fascination for children, who, though grasping, loving to hoard and accumulate, find in the mystery surrounding Sancta Claus a charm surpassing even his bounty. See a child spring from bed early Christmas morning, grasp and examine its stocking, finding in it long-coveted, unlooked-for treasures, meanwhile imagining the fat, white-bearded old man crossing, like "Puss in Boots," hill and dale, sea and lake, to bring it presents, bending perchance over its sleeping form to imprint a kiss, then slipping away without waiting to be thanked. Can human fancy picture a more entrancing scene ? When in after years does any moment yield more unalloyed bliss ?

Mammy, often provoking with her strict notions of nursery discipline, outdid herself that morning,

for though we implored her to let us empty our stockings just to see if that lump in the toe was a dime or quarter, she barbarously put them away, and rubbing, scrubbing, combing, curling, as if for dear life's sake, dressed us for breakfast. Below stairs the halls, dining and sitting rooms decorated with cedar and holly, the vases filled with flowers on tables and mantels, and huge logs blazing on the hearths, made a cheery, comforting scene.

Though President Jackson had not for years used any intoxicants, a bowl of foaming egg-nog graced the side-board, and on tables near were presents for each member of the household. Mrs. Donelson occupied, while mistress of the White House, the second-story corner room facing Pennsylvania Avenue, using the one back of it as a nursery. In the former three of her children, Mary (myself), John and Rachel, credited at the time with being the first births in the Executive Mansion, were born, her eldest child, Jackson, having been born in Tennessee. The President's adopted son and daughter occupied the two adjoining rooms, and he the central one, now known as the Prince of Wales' room because used by his Royal Highness when President Buchanan's guest in 1860. The play-room, belonging to-day to the official suite, was near the President's. His bed, a high, four-post carved

Rachel Donelson

mahogany, with tester and heavy damask curtains, was reached by carpeted steps which we children dearly loved to scamper up and down. When ill we often carried him his meals, he reciprocating the attention when we were confined in bed. Suffering from painful respiration, he slept propped up by high pillows. Opposite his bed hung his wife's portrait with pictures of the two Rachels on either side, a standing breakfast question being, "Which Rachel did you look at first this morning, uncle?" the lucky one being the morning belle. The author and sharer of most of our pleasures, he often shielded us from punishment when naughty, and my mother once bewailing his over-indulgence, quoted the Bible: "Spare the rod and spoil the child," but he replied: "I think, Emily, with all due deference to the Good Book, that love and patience are better disciplinarians than rods." Traveling, he generally took along a box of silver half-dollars for his namesakes, then both numerous and ubiquitous, saying to their mothers: "Baby can cut teeth on my gift now, later show him his country's eagle thereon, and teach him to love and honor it."

We were permitted to spend the morning, and a blissful one it proved, in the play-room, where Uncle, cousins Sarah and Andrew, my mother and father, and some playmates joined us and helped us

unload our stockings, finding in each a silver quarter, fruit, candy, cakes and nuts. Many friends remembered us, White House children then, as now, exciting much public interest. Many of cousin Rachel's presents were beautiful, and two of mine were so unique and pleasure-giving that after all these sad years they still loom up shining milestones in childhood's sunny way. Madame Serrurier of the French Legation sent me a boy doll wearing the red, brass-button jacket, grey, gold-striped pants, plumed chapeau, spurs and sabre worn by French postilions. My god-father, the Vice-President, sent me a miniature cooking stove with spirit lamp ready to light. I had had many handsome dolls, but never a boy doll before, and like other foolish mothers welcoming a son after a succession of disappointing daughters I clasped him in my arms and crowned him lord and master of my heart. Wherever I went for some weeks some one would ask: "Mary, how 's your boy ?" Lighting the lamp in the toy stove we boiled water in the tiny kettle and popped corn in the oven, shouting gleefully when the kettle sang and the corn executed its staccato dance, occasionally giving us a hot smack on the face or hands.

The etiquette forbidding ladies presiding over Executive Mansions from receiving or returning

social calls was either *non est* or disregarded at that time, for Mrs. Donelson, who was many years the junior of any of her predecessors or successors, and who had that love of pleasure and desire to please natural to young, attractive women, had a large visiting list, including most of the ladies prominent in social and official circles. Among her intimates were Mrs. Macomb, Mrs. R. E. Lee, from Arlington, Mrs. Rives, Mrs. Blair, Miss Lizzie Blair, Mrs. Watson and her daughters, Misses Cora Livingston and Rebecca McLane. Miss Livingston, who was my god-mother and mother's dearest friend, was for many years the acknowledged belle of Washington, many distinguished authors paying homage in familiar writings to her rare tact and personal charm and imparting to her social triumphs traditionary interest.

Not the least of that happy day's diversions was making our toilettes for the afternoon fête, and it was amusing to see the high and mighty airs Mammy assumed on the occasion, changing a bow here, supplying a pin there, arranging plaits, ruffles and puffs, then when she had finished dressing us surveying her work as an artist might a completed *chef d'œuvre*. We wore the costumes presented to us by our parents as Christmas gifts — Cousin Rachel, who was pretty and graceful, a pink cashmere ; I, a blue one ; we both wore silk clock stockings with

kid slippers. John was gorgeous in a Highland plaid suit, and brother Jackson, who was tall, erect and handsome, gave promise in a brass-button jacket of the gallant officer he afterwards became. Miss Cora Livingston, who kindly volunteered to chaperone the frolic, came about four and led the way to the East Room, which was tastefully decorated with evergreens and flowering plants. Our guests arrived promptly, and meeting them at the door, we kissed the girls and shook hands with the boys. The former wore light colors, the latter their smartest suits, all making a brave showing, though there were no elaborate costumes, styled Worth confections and suggesting Parisian ballet dancers, like those seen nowadays at juvenile gatherings. Among our guests were the Woodbury, Blake, Jones, Lee, Macomb, Carroll, Graham, Turnbull, Pleasanton, Taney, Corcoran, Peters, and Hobbie children, with all of whom we were well acquainted, having dancing-school, Sunday-school, picnic and play-room associations in common. A few older guests, Mrs. Madison bringing her grand-niece, Addie Cutts; Mrs. Lee with little Custis, Baroness Krudener, Mesdames Huygens and Serrurier and Sir Edward Vaughn, joined the President and members of his family in the Red Room and served as spectators of a novel and delightful entertainment.

We played "Blind Man's Buff," "Hide and Seek," "Puss-in-the-Corner," and several juvenile forfeit games, all entered into with zest and thoroughly enjoyed, the East Room proving an ideal play-ground, and the players, free and unrestrained as if on a Texas prairie, romping, scampering, shouting, laughing, in all the exuberance of childish merry-making. Mr. Van Buren and Miss Cora joined in, rather led the games, and added greatly to their success. Several amusing incidents varied their usual routine. In "Hide and Seek" the switch, after numerous hot and cold signals, was discovered in a boy's jacket pocket, where a mischievous girl had slipped it, and in "Puss-in-the-Corner," Willie M——, provoked with Jennie T—— for eluding his grasp, called out: "You are no pussy, but a slippery old cat."

Washington gossips accused Mrs. Donelson of heading a conspiracy to make a match between the Vice-President and Miss Cora, but as she married a Mr. Barton some years later, and as he never gave his children a step-mother, those gossips evidently erred then as they occasionally do to-day. The failure to catch them together beneath the mistletoe bough suspended from the central East Room chandelier was probably the only disappointment of the evening, all hoping that such a conjunction might

have auspicious results. Mr. Van Buren, having incurred a penalty in a forfeit game, was sentenced to stand on one leg and say:

"Here I stand all ragged and dirty,
If you don't come kiss me I 'll run like a turkey!"

and no kiss being volunteered, he strutted like a game gobbler across the room, amid peals of laughter. With one exception, the penalties incurred by the children were bravely paid. Little Mary ——, known to have a sweet voice, when sentenced to sing "A Paper of Pins," hung her head shyly, whispering: "I 'd rather dance than sing," then when led out to dance she burst out crying, sobbing: "I don't want to sing or dance. Please let me alone," and Miss Cora, taking her on her lap, said: "All right, Mary, I 'll pay your forfeit," and sang very sweetly:

"Oh! I will give you a paper of pins,
For that is the way that love begins,
If you will marry — marry, marry me!"

About six o'clock the dining-room was opened, displaying a picture of surpassing beauty, one that the four seasons and field, forest, and lake had united in embellishing. The band stationed in the corridor struck up the "President's March," and Miss Cora,

Martin Van Buren

forming us in line, the younger couples leading, marshaled us into supper. The scene of many historic banquets, commemorating great events and shared by world-wide celebrities, that famous room never witnessed one in which the decorator's art, or the confectioner's skill, achieved greater triumphs — Vivart, hailed as Napoleon of Cooks, Master Chef de Cuisine, Wizard, Magician, receiving hearty congratulations on all sides. In the center of a maltese-cross-shaped table towered a pyramid of snow-balls, interspersed with colored icicles and surmounted by a gilt game cock, head erect, wings outspread. At the upright ends of the cross were dishes of frozen marvels, at the top one representing iced fruits— oranges, apples, pears, peaches, grapes; at the bottom one representing iced vegetables — corn, carrots, beans, squashes. At one transverse end was a tiny frosted pine tree, beneath which huddled a group of toy animals; at the other a miniature rein-deer stood in a plateau of water in which disported a number of gold-fish. There were candies, cakes, confections of every conceivable design; delicious viands, relishes and beverages. Though almost transfixed with admiring delight, we did ample justice to the tempting repast and eagerly accepted the lovely ornaments given us as souvenirs.

After supper the central pyramid was demolished

and the snow-balls, which were made of non-combustible starch-coated cotton, each one enclosing a French pop-kiss, were distributed to us, and we were invited to play snow-ball in the East Room, an invitation the more joyfully hailed because the winter having been exceptionally mild we had been debarred our usual snow-ball games. The balls striking exploded, and for some moments the East Room was the scene of an exciting snow flurry, with the startling addition of the thunder and lightning characteristic of summer storms. The President, Mrs. Madison, and other elderly guests, who had watched the game from the southern end of the room, heartily sharing and enjoying the children's merriment, were spared, but the players, pelting each other unmercifully, looked like snow-entrapped wayfarers. It was great fun to see them dodging the balls and to hear them scream when struck, though the balls, being soft and light, caused no bruises and inflicted no damage on clothes or furniture. The game, exhilarating and inspiring, was provokingly brief, the supply of snow-balls being soon exhausted. Then the escorts sent for the children having arrived, Miss Cora, giving us quietly some instructions, reformed us in line as at supper, the band played a lively air and we marched several times around the room. The last time, bowing to the group at the upper end, we paused before the

President, and kissing our hands to him said, "Good-night, General"; he smiling and bowing in return. "What a beautiful sight," said Mrs. Madison. "It reminds me of the fairy procession in 'Midsummer Night's Dream.'" "It recalls to me, Madam," said the President, "our Divine Master's words: 'Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.'"

A ROYAL CHRISTMAS TREE

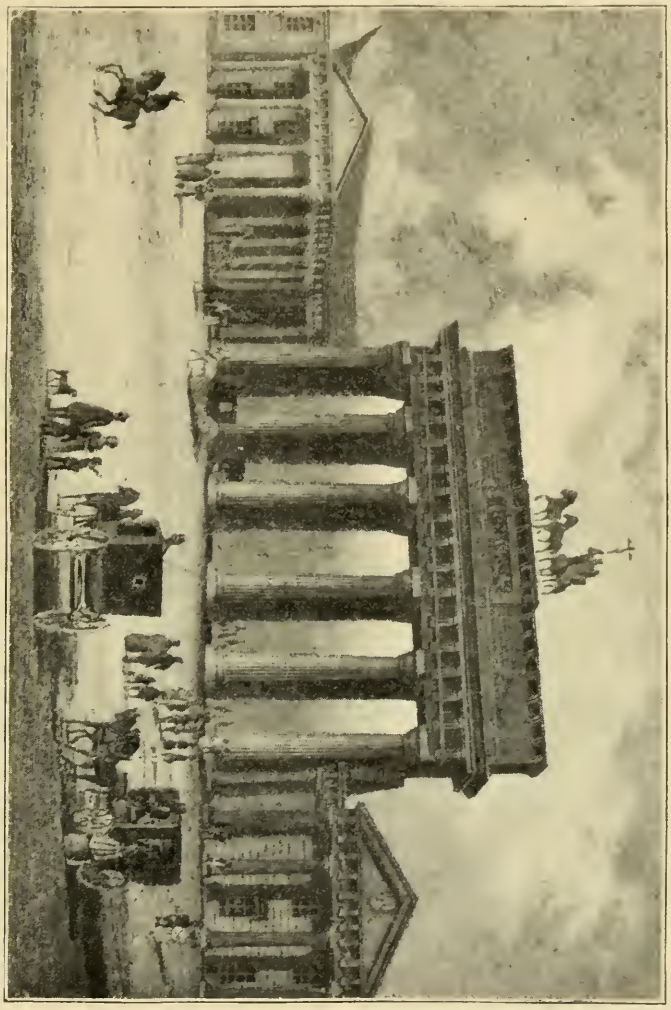
BERLIN, 1847

AMONG our Berlin acquaintances whom daily association transformed into friends was Hermina, eldest daughter of Field Marshal von Boyen, who as Blucher's aid at Waterloo had greatly distinguished himself. Fraulein von Boyen, who was beautiful, tactful and accomplished, was one of the Ladies-in-waiting on the Princess of Prussia, and enjoyed in an exalted degree her royal mistress' esteem and confidence. Knowing we had never participated in a Christmas Tree Celebration and would consider doing so an inestimable privilege, she offered to obtain for us an invitation to the Christmas Eve festival at the palace of H. R. H. the Prince of Prussia. Hence when a liveried courier delivered at the American Legation an envelope bearing the royal crest we were not surprised, though

immeasurably delighted. The invitation read: "H. R. H. Crown Princess of Prussia requests the presence of Misses Mary and Rachel and Master John Donelson at the palace of H. R. H. Prince of Prussia, December 24, 1847, at three o'clock P. M.—R. S. V. P." Little republicans though we were, with democratic ideas of social equality, we were much elated at the prospect of witnessing a function affording a glimpse of the inner relations of royal circles.

The best season to observe those domestic customs, associated with German life and so influential in moulding German character, is Christmas; the best place is the parental roof, and nothing so eloquently illustrates the simple faith, the honest trust, the love and sympathy, which make German homes such centers of peace and content, as the family Christmas tree.

Every soldier in camp or barracks, every sailor on shore or in harbor, all employés of stores or factories, in private or public bureaus, that can be spared, are granted furloughs, to be spent with the old folks at home. Gift-making becomes epidemic, all yielding to the infection. Generally, immediately after the holidays the females of the household begin preparing gifts for the next Christmas, which include, besides dainty knick-knacks, exquisite embroideries



Brandenburg Gate, Berlin

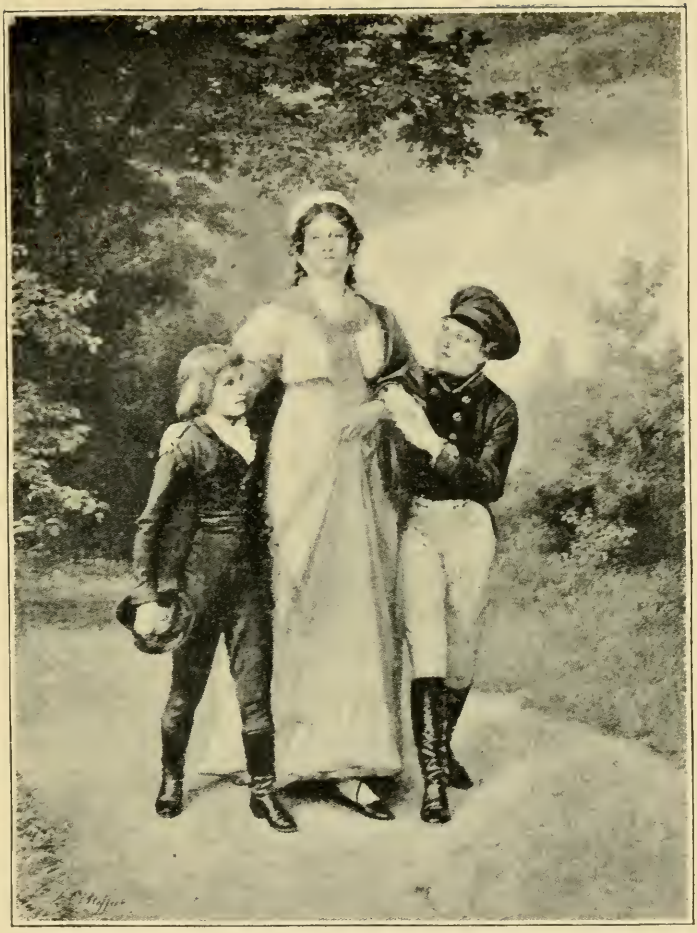
and costly keepsakes, useful, serviceable articles, such as flannels, shoes, stockings, underwear, house linen, wraps and head-gear. Many touching legends illustrate the kindly sentiments inspired by the occasion.

A little girl whose mother, a poor widow, had told her not to expect any presents, borrowed pencil and paper, and writing the following letter, addressed "Holy Child, care of God The Father," dropped it in the City Post-Office: "Dear Jesus: Mamma says we are too poor to celebrate your birth-night, but remembering that you were cradled in a manger and once were poor and lowly, I ask you to have pity on me. I want, oh, so much, dear Lord! a new dress, a red rosette for my Sunday hat, and some shoes — wooden ones will do. Gretchen, No. 10, 5th floor, Poverty Row." Her mother took her after dinner to visit the shops and street bazaars, saying: "Seeing pretty things is almost as nice as having them." Imagine Gretchen's surprise on returning home to find a small tree, trimmed and ready to light, in their garret, and beneath it, in addition to the things she had mentioned, a shawl for her mother and a package of cakes and nuts.

The lover of Roschen, a royal kitchen maid, had been convicted of larceny and imprisoned. Her master, a liberal, kind-hearted prince, ordered his

steward to distribute, as usual on Christmas, slips of paper to the under-maids with directions to write thereon the gifts they preferred. On Roschen's slip was written: "Most gracious highness: I appeal through you to God for poor Hans, who, though he stole, is a fine fellow and very dear to me. That money was stolen to buy our wedding ring. Pardon him this once and I guarantee he 'll lead henceforth an honest life." On the servants' tree was a box for Roschen enclosing Hans' pardon and money to buy wedding suits for each.

As Frederic William the Fourth was childless, his brother William was declared heir presumptive and known as Prince of Prussia. Cultured, refined, with Herculean strength and Apollo-like grace and beauty, he was the beau ideal of royalty, adored by nobles and burghers. Forming an early attachment for one of his mother's maids of honor, he insisted for many years — the affection being mutual — on marrying her, but when the succession devolved on him he manfully sacrificed individual feeling to dynastic interests and contracted an alliance with Augusta, Princess of Saxe Weimar. Though both understood that personal preference played no part in their union, the most critical court gossip could find nothing to condemn in their conjugal relations; she, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion, yielding him wifely obedience;



Louise, Queen of Prussia, and her Sons
Frederic William and William

he, like Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche*, uniformly tender and attentive. She was tall, stately, with regular features, cold, haughty manner, every look and gesture suggesting ancestral pride and conscious superiority, yet withal capable of warm attachments and loyal to friends once tried. Devoted to art and literature, she was the friend and patron of artists and scholars, and even when long past middle life still devoted her mornings to study. They had two children, a son named for the great Frederic and a daughter named for that adored Queen Louisa, whose heroism in the Napoleonic struggle had won world-wide recognition and admiration. The former, known in after years as Frederic the Noble, Emperor of Germany, was a wilful, intractable boy, represented in an unamiable light in many familiar anecdotes, yet his career adorns the brightest page in his country's history. The Prince was devoted to these children, superintending their physical, mental and spiritual development, instilling in their minds correct principles and noble aims, and fitting them by study, discipline and example for their destined high stations. He was standing with Louischen in his arms one morning watching a military procession, when she, excited by the music, sprang through an open window to the street below. Rushing frantically down stairs he was relieved to find her in the arms

of a street urchin who, standing beneath the window, caught her as she fell. Of course the boy's fortune was made. The Prince, clasping his darling to his breast, handed his watch and chain to her rescuer, and, taking his name and address, volunteered his protection. They were riding together in after years in Unter-den-Linden, he German Emperor, she Grand Duchess of Baden, when Hoedel made his dastardly attempt to assassinate his sovereign, and he springing forward to shield his child, accomplished thereby his own deliverance. When Nobiling a few months afterward, and near the same spot, fired at and severely wounded his master, the Emperor's first words on recovering from the shock were: "Thank God, dear Louischen was not along to-day!"

The Prince's palace was built during the Great Frederic's reign, and it is recorded that when the architect applied for a design the King, who was out of humor, said, pointing to a mahogany bureau with a zigzag front standing near: "Model it after that, adding as little architectural frippery as possible." In front stands Rauch's famous statue of the great ruler, near by is the Alter Schloss, city residence of Prussians monarchs, the new Opera House, and many handsome public buildings.

Christmas Eve, 1847, though bitter cold, was bright and sunny, the air clear and crisp was musi-

cal with sleigh bells, and the streets, though ice bound, were gay with rejoicing crowds evidently imbued with holiday influences. Directly after breakfast we went to the Thiergarten Lake to witness the delightful entertainment given there daily by Berlin's far-famed Skating Club. The lake, large, smooth, solid, mirroring a translucent sky, seemed with its banks lined with brilliantly costumed spectators, to suggest and invite winter sport. A military band, sheltered in a warm enclosure, played a succession of inspiring airs, trained voices often joining in and enthusing both onlookers and performers. The skaters executing many picturesque movements, artistic pantomimes, exciting games, and dancing polkas, mazurkas, cotillions, waltzes, were reputed the most skilful in the world. Meyerbeer, who was a frequent visitor, is said to have conceived there the beautiful skating scene in the opera *Le Prophete* he was then composing. The costumes of the skaters were tasteful and appropriate, the girls wearing short, narrow, heavy cloth skirts, with tight fitting bodices, snug hoods or hats, and a profusion of bright bows, rosettes and scarfs. The men were mostly in uniform, their gay sashes, brilliant orders and decorations enhancing the charm of their lithe, graceful figures. There were no accidents, no untoward occurrences, and the glorious morning proved

a delightful prelude to an unforgetable evening. Fraulein von Boyen had given us minute directions as to our costumes and the prescribed etiquette, saying: "Dress simply and inexpensively, be careful never to turn your backs on royal personages, never address remarks or questions to them, allowing them the initiative in conversation."

Promptly at three o'clock we alighted at the palace *porte cochere*, and ascending the marble steps, at the top and bottom of which stood armed sentinels, were received by liveried ushers and conducted through the beautiful hall and up the flower-lined stairs to the state drawing rooms where a lady-in-waiting met us and accompanied us through a number of superbly-furnished, beautifully-decorated rooms to the *salle de musique*, where Fraulein von Boyen welcomed us, and, escorting us to the centre of the *salle*, presented us to Her Royal Highness, the Crown Princess.

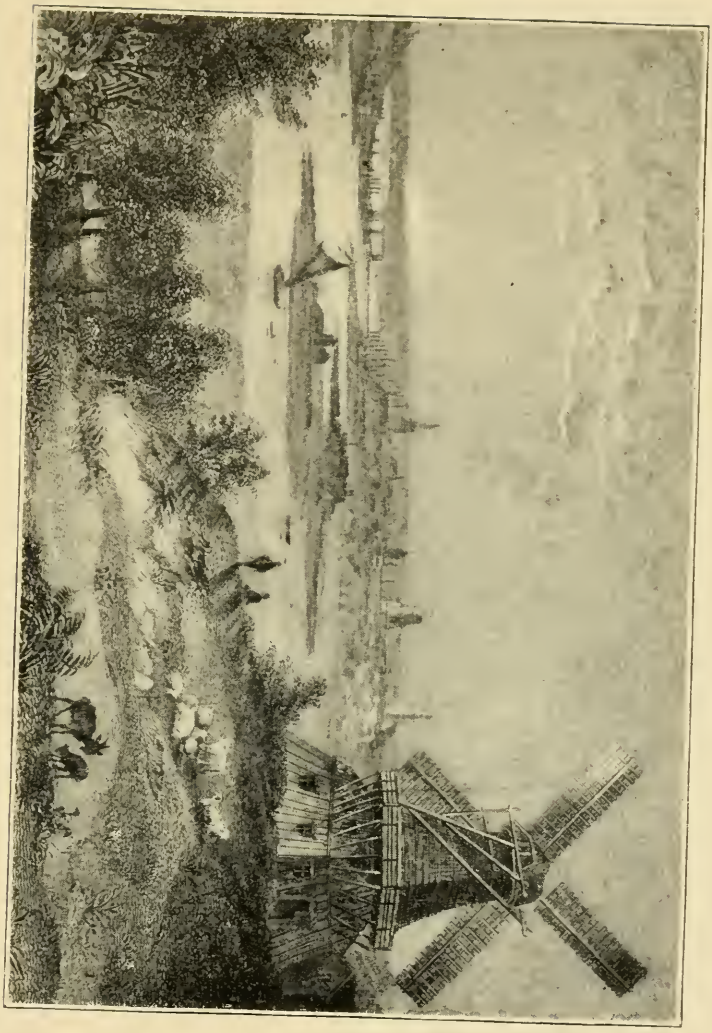
The *salle*, large and spacious,— tessellated floor, frescoed ceiling, walls hung with mirrors and pictures, exquisite bronzes and statues alternating with palms, ferns and flowering plants,— had at its extreme end a flower-trimmed stage, the lowered curtain of which suggested a dramatic performance. Rows of handsomely-cushioned arm chairs were in front of the stage, and just beyond them stood the Crown Prin-

cess, surrounded by her royal cousins, children of her father's brothers. Among her guests were Lady Rose, daughter of Lord Westmoreland, English Ambassador, some other youthful members of the Diplomatic Corps and about forty or fifty maids and youths, children of personal attendants of the Princess.

The Crown Princess, then entering her teens, received us without hesitation or timidity, and we marveled at her self-possession and familiarity with court etiquette; though modest and gentle, there was a notable absence of self-assertion. Dressed in a blue challis trimmed with swan's down, her only ornament was a gold chain around her bare neck from which hung a medallion miniature of her grandmother, said to be her father's Christmas present. Fair, with blue eyes, light brown hair worn simply plaited down her back, she was a perfect type of happy, innocent girlhood, her plump, rounded proportions bespeaking health and strength, her bright, expressive face beaming with hope and content. The girls were dressed in bright woolens, bare necks and arms without ornaments; the youths wore the uniforms of the regiments in which they were enrolled as cadets. The Crown Prince, who stood near his sister and gracefully assisted her, wore the uniform of the Royal Guards, in which he already held a

command. Tall, slender, rather good looking, he impressed us as being dignified and refined, though grave and reserved. There was some stir when the King and Queen, followed by the Prince and Princess, entered unannounced. The Crown Princess, stepping forward, greeted them cordially, then taking first the Queen's, then her mother's, then the King's, hands, kissed them respectively. She then took her father's, but folding her in his arms he kissed her tenderly on the brow. Everybody smiled — a touch of nature makes the whole world akin.

The King and Queen, though plain and unattractive in person and manner, were kind, charitable, devoted to each other, conscientious in the discharge of their public duties and universally popular. They moved unceremoniously about the *salle*, chatting pleasantly with their niece's guests and seemingly finding the scene enjoyable. My brother said next day: "At first disappointed, I was glad the King and Queen did not wear their crowns, for if they had they would not have talked so freely with us." After the arrival of some other royal personages, followed by a number of gorgeously-uniformed officers and some handsomely-dressed maids of honor, attendants on the Queen and Princess, the ladies-in-waiting distributed the programmes, gilt-engraved, embossed cards, and escorting the



The Old Sans Souci Mill

Queen and Princess to the front chairs, assigned us to those in the rear.

The programme read:

PANORAMIC PRELUDE.

FIRST PART.

Scenes from the Story of the Nativity.

1st SCENE.—Annunciation: Hail Mary! Blessed art thou among women!

2nd SCENE.—Adoration of the Magi: We hail Thee, King of the Jews.

3rd SCENE.—The Flight into Egypt: Arise, take the young Child, flee into Egypt, and be there until I bring thee word.

4th SCENE.—Transfiguration: This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him.

SECOND PART.

Scenes from Prussian History.

1st SCENE.—Economy and Industry kingly attributes: King Frederic noticing a crowd watching a shop-window picture, depicting a shabbily-dressed old man, a *fac simile* of himself, who, holding a coffee-mill, turned the handle with one hand and with the other caught the falling coffee grains, ordered the picture to be lowered so his subjects could see, without craning their necks, what a thrifty king they had.

2nd SCENE.—In Prussia Justice outranks Power: An unsightly old mill obscuring the view from Sans Souci. King Frederic determined to buy and remove it. The miller, however, refusing to sell, the agent said: "Don't choose to sell, indeed! You forget His Majesty can seize your mill and clap you in jail." "Not," said the miller, "while we have the Kammer-gericht here in Berlin." The King, hearing the agent's report, said: "The miller is right; here in Prussia Justice outranks Power."

3rd SCENE.—Honor to whom honor is due: Queen Louisa, as patriotic as gracious, visited the Prussian camp after the battle of Yena, and with her own hands bestowed the order of the Black Eagle on those heroes most conspicuous in defense of King and Fatherland.

An invisible choir chanted to piano accompaniment during the first part of the program some sacred anthems; during the first two scenes of the second part, the "Prussian Battle Hymn," and during the last scene, "God Save the Queen," adding greatly to the scenic effect. After the curtain fell there was an interval of lively, friendly conversation, everybody commenting on the Panoramic Prelude and pronouncing it excellent, unique, inimitable. We were told that the Crown Princess, consulting with her governess, had herself selected the scenes, which

William I., Emperor of Germany

were copies of well-known pictures in the Berlin Art Gallery, and managed their arrangement, declining the proffered services of some professional decorators. It was edifying to note the ill-concealed delight of the royal parents at the success of their daughter's undertaking, every feature and action bespeaking that parental pride which, in prince or peasant, nabob or pauper, is more becoming than any human adornment.

About half-past four o'clock a heavy portiere quietly opening displayed in an adjoining room a large, brilliantly-lighted, artistically-trimmed tree, its top almost reaching the ceiling, its outspreading branches nearly filling the room. A murmur of delight was heard, and surely no Hesperian garden or enchanted forest ever showed a braver specimen. The King and Queen and royal personages led the way, and, merrily trooping in, almost too eager for a nearer view to mind our P's and Q's, we flitted to and fro around the tree. The decorations, consisting of golden fruit, paper flowers and wreathes, stuffed birds and animals, with bon-bons, confections and ornaments, spangled, tinseled, frosted, of every conceivable hue and design, were crowned by a glittering star. Here beneath a tuft of foliage would be a bright-plumaged bird with outstretched wings, just beyond a squinting owl so life-like we

shrank from its expected screech; perched on this bough would be a frog or lizard; on that one a squirrel, and above would crouch a glossy leopard. Beneath the tree on soft green moss were piled the presents — presents for guests, friends, attendants, young and old; generally for the girls, work-baskets, needle-cases and toilet dainties; for the boys, knives, pocket-books, fishing and hunting implements. My present was a small dressing-case, my sister's a silk reticule, my brother's a hunter's horn.

The Crown Princess was, of course, generously remembered, and seemed much pleased with our offering, an Indian basket curiously wrought with shells, bird feathers and sweet grasses and containing a pair of moccasins and a watch-case, all made by Indians of Northern New York. Neither her presents to members of the royal household nor theirs to her were displayed.

Old Baron Humboldt, who was the best-known and most popular member of Berlin society, often called the court *enfant gâté* (spoiled child), acted as Kris Kringle, and played the rôle to perfection, the King and Prince of Prussia serving as his aides and leading in the merriment his happy jokes excited. The bon-bons and fancy confections on the tree were divided among us and promptly disposed of, though the other decorations were undisturbed, the

tree being intended, presumably, for use on another occasion. After the presents had been distributed the Baron, turning to the Crown Princess, said with mock humility: "Having accomplished my task, I await further orders from Your Royal Highness." "And I," said she, handing him a box containing a gold pen, "order you, honored Baron, to reserve this pen for the sonnets and madrigals to be henceforth indited to your lady-loves." These words, the Baron being a confirmed old bachelor, never having been known in all his life to express a preference for any woman, caused a general titter.

We were invited to partake of a collation in the state dining-room — bouillon, *eau sucree,* cold meats, salads, ices, cakes and divers confections. The King, Queen and royal personages occupied tables at the upper end of the room and enjoyed probably a more elaborate *menu*, with Champagne and Johannisberg; we were at tables lower down, the Crown Princess, her brother and royal cousins being at one in our midst. The hilarity usual when young people, always hungry, enjoy appetizing eatables prevailed.

At the close of the repast the King, Queen and other royalties rose and passed down the room, bowing right and left. The Crown Princess then rose, and, stopping at each table, smilingly bade her

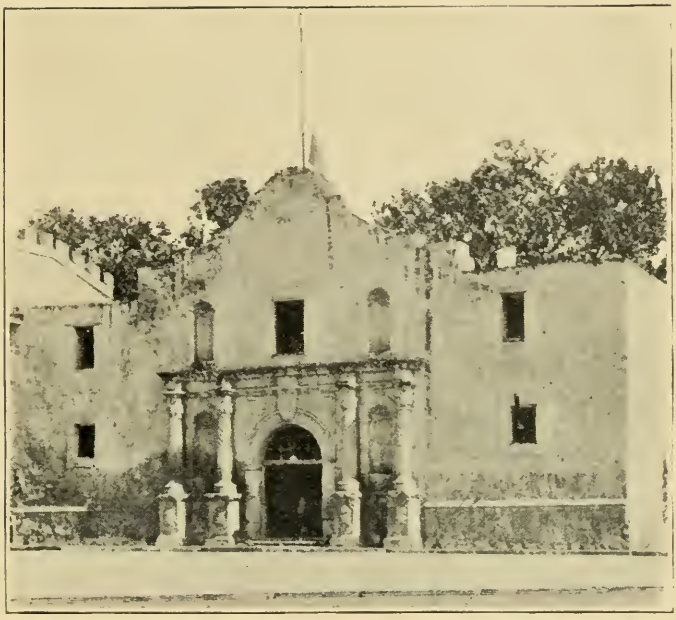
guests good-night. Guided by Fraulein von Boyen and the ladies-in-waiting we then returned to the *Salle de Musique,* where, superintending the donning of our wraps and being sure that our attendant footmen were on hand, they received our adieux. By half past seven we were back at home, having enjoyed an entertainment which, though formal and ceremonious, punctilious etiquette being observed, was free from stiffness or constraint and devoid of anything that could offend republican pride. Though the marks setting apart those of royal blood were unmistakable, what refined courtesy, what kindly grace characterized their intercourse with their unroyal associates! There were no suggestions of the *nouveaux riches* or parvenue autocrats, everything betokening generations of culture and refinement, ancestral dignity, inherited power and withal a simplicity and modesty characteristic of self-respecting superiority. The costumes of the Queen and Princesses were elegant and tasteful, their superb satins, velvets, brocades, their sparkling jewels, becoming them as the appropriate setting of rare gems. And those brave, lordly men! so chivalric and gentle, so noble and courteous. How appropriate seemed their orders and decorations. Truly the bravest are the tenderest!

THE ALCALDE'S DAUGHTER AND HER CHRISTMAS LAMP

LONG years ago, while the Mexican standard still waved over the Alamo, San Antonio de Bexar, the most flourishing Catholic Mission east of the Rio Grande, rejoiced in an Alcalde as famous for wisdom and virtue as for piety and goodness. Successful in his public enterprises, he was equally fortunate in his private relations, having a beautiful wife, an inviting home, and a brood of stalwart sons. That they had no daughter was much regretted by both, Donna Inez saying: "Boys serve to perpetuate the name and uphold the family honor, but it is the girls who, lifting the domestic burden from the mothers' shoulders, and cheering, comforting the fathers, bless and brighten home," and, when in answer to repeated *Novenas* of prayer and votive offerings, a daughter was born to them, they, naming her Maria

Jesusa Pepita, gratefully dedicated her to the Virgin. Growing in beauty and grace and developing many lovable traits, Jesusa more than fulfilled parental hopes. Humoring, petting her father, preparing his *pulque,* filling his pipe, she became his daily companion and the idol of his heart.

Don Pedro's office, adjoining the Alamo, then garrisoned by Mexican troops ordered to report to him and serve him when needed, was really the High Court of Justice where the Mission officials met to consider public matters, whether civil, religious or military. His home, the most spacious and pretentious at the Mission, was a one-story, flat-roof *adobe* structure, with about fifteen chambers separated by quaint halls, corridors and alcoves, and stood back of the Alamo amid extensive grounds, which, irrigated by a large *acequia*, teemed with rare, beautiful flowers, with orange, lemon and citron trees, with vine-covered bowers and arcades almost hidden beneath clusters of luscious grapes. Some curious animals roamed in these beautiful grounds, and among those specially petted and cared for by Jesusa were Chihuahua dogs, tricky and playful; Maltese cats, soft-eyed fawns, white rabbits, and a canary bird which, as it tuned up when the matin and vesper bells rang, was supposed to be under the Virgin's protection. Though an earnest defender of



The Alamo

the faith, Don Pedro was a devotee of those sports — cock fighting, bull fighting, card playing — patronized by his associates. He had a cock pit in his yard for the rearing and training of game cocks, where their mettle was often tried Sunday afternoons, and on his Salado ranch, where, in spite of frequent Indian raids, his family spent much time, he had a breed of superior bulls imported from Spain.

Opposite the Alamo on the slope leading to the river stood a number of *jacals* tenanted by humble Mexican families, with one of whom lived a boy and girl supposed from their fair complexions, blue eyes and light hair, to be stragglers from the western white settlements, and who were known as the Americanos — the boy being called Cano and the girl Cana. Though kindly cared for by their protectors — Mexicans are proverbially patient and indulgent with children — they never affiliated with their playmates, but, holding themselves aloof, seemed to be ever brooding over some secret sorrow. The boy, smart and ingenious, was often seen hanging round the Alamo, where doing odd jobs for the garrison and making himself useful, he became a great favorite. Jesusa, generous, unselfish, sympathetic, was as popular with the Mission juveniles as the Alcalde with their elders. Noticing Cana watching her bird one morning, she invited her to come in

and become acquainted with her pets. Children easily become friends, a certain free-masonry opening their hearts and drawing them together, and Jesusa, improving the meeting in the garden, became the generous patron of Cana, constantly making her presents and treating her to unexpected pleasures.

San Antonio, though isolated from social and commercial privileges and almost exclusively absorbed in religious interests, was gay and sociable, fandangoes, card parties, *alfresco* banquets, at which the famous Mexican dishes — tortillas, tomales, frijoles, chile con carne, dulces con fruta — were served in perfection, being of frequent occurrence. Holidays abounded, Saints' Days, National Anniversaries, Family Fêtes being carefully and elaborately observed, and at no place was Christmas celebrated with more pomp and solemnity. Two San Antonio Christmas observances — the Pastores and Christmas Lamp — deserve special notice. The former was a species of dramatic performance intended to represent the Passion of Christ, and given every night during Christmas week; the latter was founded on the familiar legend that the Infant Jesus, descending from His Father's Heavenly Throne to His Virgin Mother's Arms, noticed a lighted lamp hanging near an humble home, and learning that it was intended to commemorate

the guiding of the Magi by the Star of Bethlehem to His lowly manger, blessed the home and its inmates, leaving as visible marks of His Favor some desired presents.

On Christmas Eve, 183–, much excitement prevailed at the Mission, it being announced that the Alcalde had contributed a generous sum towards improving and adorning the hall to be used for the Pastores, which would be represented on a handsomer scale than ever before, and that Padre Ignacio, the San Fernando priest, who, officiating for many years at christenings, marriages, funerals, and hearing confessions, imposing penances or granting indulgences — thus becoming the Alter Ego of devout San Antonians — had, yielding to the solicitations of some influential San Fernando parishioners, consented to bless the lamps in church, thus giving them public consecration. Heretofore, they had only been blessed privately. Many of them, a few being costly and ornate, were heirlooms, having belonged to the parents, grand-parents, great-grand-parents, of their owners, and being endeared by tender domestic associations.

Until a certain age children were not allowed to handle Christmas lamps, their parents acting for them; and attaining the prescribed age, were required by fasting and prayer to prepare themselves for the

ceremony, the failure of the Holy Child to notice their lamps and leave some mark of favor being regarded as the severest of rebukes. An importance somewhat similar to the assuming of the toga by Roman youths, or to the reception by sovereigns of royal courtiers, was attached to the function. The plazas de Yslas y de Armas, adjoining San Fernando, generally crowded on afternoons with rancheros driving bargains or computing gains and losses, were filled on the Christmas Eve referred to with devout lamp-bearing worshippers wending their way to church. Padre Ignacio officiated at the Vesper service, then pronouncing the benediction retired to the Sacristy, where he laid aside his altar vestments and, returning to the church wearing his plain priestly robe, stood outside the chancel rail and awaited the lamp bearers desiring his blessing, who, advancing in line, knelt before him. Taking each lamp in his hand he made over it the sign of the cross, and having blessed them all said solemnly: "*Domine, ad adjuvandem vos festina.*" It was an impressive scene, deeply moving the lamp-bearers, who, returning home, lighted and hung their lamps on previously-selected poles or bushes, where shining like stars in the quiet skies they seemed to reflect the simple, trusting faith characteristic of all sincere followers of Christ.

The Alcalde, deeply interested, burnished and prepared with his own hands his daughter's lamp, she being too young to do so herself; then lighting it, hung it — ignoring his own preference for a secluded nook near her window — in an obscure angle of an unfrequented corner of the Alamo which she, as familiar with the Alamo as with her own home, had chosen. It happened to be just under the hall where Bowie, Crockett, Travis, and their brave comrades made their desperate stand some years later against Santa Anna and where, sealing with their blood their devotion to liberty and independence, they enriched human annals with that sublimest of all sublime records.

THE PASTORES

Picture a large barn-like hall without doors or windows, hard dirt floor, rough-plastered walls on which some oil lamps and tallow candles in wooden brackets smoke and cast a dim spectral light. A platform raised about two feet above the floor and extending across the entire back of the hall serves as a stage, and some large, striped Mexican blankets do duty as a drop curtain. The actors remain all the time on the stage, those taking part in the scenes advance to the center, play their rôles, then retire to

the sides where those not acting gather behind the curtain and are supposed to be invisible. There was no attempt at scenic effect, no applause, but absorbed, unflagging attention. In front of the stage were some large chairs, in which Don Pedro, Donna Inez and other distinguished personages were seated; back of the chairs were rows of benches occupied by well-dressed men and women, and in open spaces behind and on the sides of the benches a motley crowd of women wearing *rebosas* and sewing, knitting, or plaiting and combing their hair, and men wearing *sombreros* and drinking *pulque*, smoking, or playing cards, sat flat on the floor. After rather a long wait, some musicians sitting near the stage sang to a guitar accompaniment some disconnected strains from church chants or masses. The curtain, parting and being drawn aside, discloses two men, the one fair, handsome and well-dressed, representing the Angel of God, the other dark, ugly, with a club foot and horns projecting above a lowering brow, representing the devil, who have an excited dispute about the advent of the expected Redeemer. These two men appear in every scene. Then follow in regular succession the Annunciation, the Adoration of the Magi, Christ in the Temple, the Temptation, the Crucifixion, the Empty Sepulchre, all being taken literally from the Bible. In the last scene the Devil kneels before

The Alcalde's Daughter

the Angel of God, acknowledges the Divinity of Christ, and begs to be admitted to the community of the Redeemed.

The Virgin was personated by a young, beautiful, pure-looking woman; Christ by a handsome, refined youth; Pontius Pilate by a large, vulgar-looking man; Herodias by a saucy, bold girl; Mary Magdalene by a pale, forlorn-looking woman. There were occasional intermissions during which the singers treated the audience to some rather sweet music. A cynic, marveling that the managers of the Pastores should select scenes from a Bible they never read, might describe the performance as a travesty of a faith they would die to defend, yet he would have to acknowledge the earnest interest taken by the audience to be significant of the human sympathy always aroused by the story of Bethlehem.

The most pleasant of Christmas Eve duties, arranging the childrens' presents near or under the lighted lamps, followed the Pastores. Occasionally a lamp would be hung in a chapel or other preferred place not adjoining the family home, there being no danger of its being molested, a certain sacredness protecting both lamp and presents.

Waking early, Jesusa crept on tip-toe from her little room and hurried to the spot where her lamp

had been hung, trembling with glad expectancy of the beautiful things she hoped to find there. A light still flickered in it, but there was nothing beneath or near it. What could it mean? She stood a moment spell-bound, then recalling some childish misdemeanors she burst into tears, and falling on her knees, sobbed: "I have been wicked. I was not worthy of Thy favor, Holy Child of God! Thou hast seen fit to punish me." Don Pedro and Donna Inez, hearing her leave the house, had followed her, wishing to see her delight at the pleasant surprises they had prepared for her. "Wicked, indeed," said he; "the angels in heaven are not purer. Some thief has despoiled you. We'll catch him, punish him and force him to make restitution."

Though slow to anger and prone to mercy, he was so incensed that he summoned the Mission Council to meet at once in his office to consider an important matter. A night guard at the Alamo testified that making his rounds he saw the white girl called Cana cross the street and go round the corner where the lamp hung; that later he saw her again cross the street and return home, but that seeing her often playing with Jesusa he suspected nothing, and did not follow her. However, when relieved from duty, he picked up near the corner she had passed the *dulces* and ribbon end, which he there and then pro-

duced. The Mexican woman with whom the child lived testified that early that morning Cana had divided with her children a box of *dulces*, and had given her a bow from which the ribbon end had evidently been detached, claiming to have found them. Cana when arrested and brought to the Alcalde's office, denied bitterly any knowledge of either *dulces* or ribbon, then when cross-questioned she became confused and finally began crying: "I knew where Jesusa meant to hang her lamp. I was curious to see what she had, then I don't know how or why I did it, I grabbed her things, carried them home and hid them in the hole at the foot of the hill."

Jesusa, who had been sitting on a stool at her father's feet, slipped to Cana's side and gently took her hand. "Don't cry, Cana," said she. "You 've done nothing wrong. You knew I would be willing for you to have them." "Señor Alcalde," said one of the Council, a tall, dark man with a loud, harsh voice, "justice and public safety demand the punishment of criminals, and I move that this self-convicted thief be fined twenty-five pesos and in default of payment of said fine that she be stripped and publicly flogged, then confined during Christmas week in the Mission jail." Cano, who, hanging his head in shame, had crouched behind the door, here sprang forward, fell on his knees and grasping Jesusa's

hand, prayed: "Oh! Jesusa, don't let them strip and flog my sister. I have strong arms and keen eyes. I will work and earn the money to pay for the things Cana, poor little weak lamb, took. For the love of God, for the Holy Virgin's sake, don't let them whip her." Jesusa, kindly pressing his hand, said: "Have no fear," then throwing her arms round her father's neck, cried: "*Padre mio, caro padre mio,* you have never refused a request. Don't let them harm Cana." "Be quiet, my love"; then turning to the Junta he said firmly (and Don Pedro knew well how and when to assume the air of authority): "I will pay this child's fine and give her the protection of my home. I also adjourn the *Junta*."

He then summoned the Mexican with whom the children lived and obtained from him the following story:

"As has been my custom for some time, I went last year to the Comanche Camp on the Pecos for trading purposes, and while there noticed two white children whose miserable condition excited my pity and caused me to ask the chief who they were and where they came from. Evading my questions at first, he finally told me that he had stolen them while on a horse-raiding expedition to the Brazos; that going through the woods late one evening near a house occupied by apparently well-to-do people, he saw the

children gathering pecans, and creeping up to them, seized them, strapped them to the back of his horse and fled, expecting to ransom them for a considerable sum. He sent an agent to make terms with the parents, but the agent, returning, reported that the affair had created such a stir he thought it unadvisable to broach the subject. I proposed a trade, and he agreed to take for them a mule, a bridle and a red blanket. I brought them home, intending to try for the ransom, but I did not know how to go about it." "Speaking of ransom, for how much could you, *amigo mio,* be induced to relinquish all claims to these children?" asked the Alcalde. "*Señor,* you know me to be a poor man with a family to support, and needing money badly. Otherwise, I would present them to your honor. Would you be willing to offer twenty *pesos?*" "Here are fifty *pesos.* Read and sign this agreement, which, as you will see, transfers to me your right and claim to them."

Obtaining the requisite authority, the Alcalde engaged a man, known to be trustworthy, to take charge of the *Americanos,* go with them to the neighborhood designated, hunt up their parents and restore to them their stolen children. Supplying them with clothes and giving to each one a well-filled purse, the Alcalde said, on parting with them: "Never forget that you owe your deliverance from

captivity, and your restoration to home and friends, to Jesusa, and remember her in your prayers."

The leave-taking between the two little girls could not have been more affecting had they been sisters, and Cano's trembling lips and tearful eyes as he bade Jesusa good-bye expressed more eloquently than words the grateful emotions surging in his brave boyish heart. In due time letters came from the rejoicing parents invoking God's blessing on the kind-hearted, generous Alcalde. Believing that their little ones had, lost in the woods, perished from starvation, or been drowned in the Brazos, they had mourned them as dead.

The night following the disappointing morning and the harrowing scene in her father's office found little Jesusa ready for bed betimes. While she slept, Donna Inez, entering her room noiselessly, hung above her cot a picture depicting the healing of Jairus' daughter, and opposite a scroll inscribed, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," both scroll and picture being the work the Nuns at the Mission Convent, who, hearing of Jesusa's defense of Cana, aspired to play the part of rewarding spirits; and nearby, a doll dressed as a queen and many playthings and trinkets calculated to please a little girl.

Awaking and seeing the scroll, Jesusa supposed

San Fernando Cathedral

she must be dreaming, then noticing her other treasures, she sprang from bed, calling: "Come *madre*, come *padre*; the angels have been here. See what they brought me. It must mean that the Holy Child smiles on me. You will go with me, will you not, *carrissimos*, to church and join me in grateful thanks for His Divine Favor," and the adoring parents, unrestrained by thoughts of superstition or deception, encouraged their trusting child in her innocent delusion.

Eventful changes fill the succeeding years. The Texas settlers in the towns and counties contiguous to San Antonio, finding the tyranny and injustice of the Mexican authorities intolerable, determine to throw off all allegiance to them and organize a separate, independent government. The wise and effective means of resistance adopted culminate in the struggles at Gonzales and Goliad, where the Texans win decisive victories.

Emboldened by success, they advance on San Antonio, defended by General Cos with a large Mexican force, and after eight days of continuous skirmishing compel him to surrender. Entering the town, they garrison the Alamo with Texas troops and hoist over it the Lone Star Flag. The Alcalde, loyal to duty, had rendered valuable assistance to the Mexican commander and, when the latter retreated, retired with

his family to his Salado ranch where, detained by Donna Inez's serious illness, he remained until the recapture of San Antonio by Santa Anna restored Mexican supremacy. His two eldest sons fell at Goliad, bravely defending their national colors, and the two younger ones were killed a year later in a skirmish on the Rio Grande. Returning to San Antonio the day after the massacre of the brave defenders of the Alamo, he was shocked at the atrocities committed by Santa Anna and, condemning them in unmeasured terms, kindly sought to alleviate the sufferings of the Texans still remaining at the mission.

The defeat of Santa Anna at San Jacinto and his subsequent inglorious return to Mexico, effectually relieved Texas from Mexican thraldom, though the alternate occupation of San Antonio by Texans under Hays and Howard, and by Mexicans under Vasquez and Woll, resulted in prolonging chaotic conditions there for some years.

Don Pedro, gracefully yielding to the inevitable, made no effort to exercise his official functions after the organization of the Texas government. Known, however, as the Alcalde, he was deferred to by both Texans and Mexicans, and, always found acting with the upright and orderly, lost neither public respect nor influence.

When General Sam Houston was elected and inaugurated President of the Republic of Texas the citizens of San Antonio invited him to visit their town, and, on his acceptance of the invitation, they determined to give him a public reception to conclude with a ball and banquet. The Alcalde, asked to act as chairman of the reception committee, surprised every one by agreeing to do so and by advancing a handsome contribution towards defraying the expenses of the reception. The ball was given in the large hall of the Veramendi House and proved a gratifying success. President Houston was accompanied by his Staff, Chief of which was a handsome young officer, Captain Osborn, who, enlisting as a private at San Jacinto, had been promoted on the battlefield for conspicuous gallantry. He was selected to open the ball with the Alcalde's daughter, Don Pedro himself presenting him to her. Then in the efflorescence of her maidenly charms, Jesusa was so lovely, her voice was so musical, her manner so gracious, that all hearts involuntarily crowned her queen of love and beauty.

And Captain Osborn, could he resist such fascinations? *Nous verrons.* Following the ball came a dinner at the Alcalde's, then other entertainments given by hospitable San Antonians, at all of which Captain Osborn was Jesusa's devoted attendant.

People smiled and said: "How well they suit! What a fine match it would be!" Captain Osborn accompanied the President back to Washington, the first Capital of Texas, but returned to San Antonio in a few weeks, when the Alcalde announced his daughter's betrothal to President Houston's Chief of Staff.

One evening the lovers were walking together near the Alamo when he asked: "Do you remember once hanging a Christmas lamp in the angle of that corner?" "Of course I do. It is one of the dearest of my childish memories." "And do you remember a little boy who once knelt to you in your father's office and implored you to protect his sister?" "Oh!" said she, the light of memory restoring the boyish cast to his features, and recalling as if by magic that exciting scene, "Can it be? Yes, you must be, you are Cano." "The dream of my life, Jesusa, has been to meet you again, and meeting you, the most cherished hope of my heart has been to win your love." "Well, you have succeeded," said she archly.

Of course, Padre Ignacio, her life-long friend and confessor, who had christened her and blessed her at her first communion, officiated at the Nuptial Mass, and who could wonder if amid the decorations transforming the San Fernando altar into a

mass of fragrant bloom there hung a Christmas lamp, whose flickering light, though obscured by the glorious sunshine flooding the church, cast a mild benison-like radiance over the young couple—brave soldier boy and maiden fair—plighting their wedded troth there, a radiance betokening faith, hope and undying love.